



Maraya TV

iOrasis Studio customer profile



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Maraya TV is an interactive entertainment channel based in Lebanon and transmitting 24 hrs a day via Arabsat and Nilesat satellites. Maraya TV is a free to air channel, reaching million of peoples in the Arab World where satellite sets are a commodity in every household. Audience is distributed among all age groups since channel content varies from interactive chat programs attracting mainly younger ages to live shows and game shows popular among all age groups.

Maraya TV is a Monty Holding channel. Monty Holding was founded in 2000 and is strong umbrella organization with diversified ventures in the television entertainment, which reach a broad scope of viewers, offering online gaming and social networking. Group companies are mainly active in sectors of broadcasting and interactive mobile services for mobile operators. Monty Holding has also started several channels before like Derby Race TV, Kalam and Qamar TV.



Maraya TV program content includes music clips, interactive games and live shows. Among top favorite shows are the classic game "Wheel of fortune" and the live show "With Mike" - "مع مايك" a major hit for user participation. This is a top priority for an interactive channel like Maraya TV. People can send SMS, or call through IVR systems to vote, play and participate in games or live shows and the whole production gives premium focus on the reliable and non-stop feed of user messages.

Maraya TV takes benefit of Monty Holding's extended experience in mobile operators' services and skilled IT/Technical/Production team. This dedicated team builds and delivers new games and shows always based on the interactive concept. This requires a real flexible system in order to implement new ideas with different layouts and schemes. The ideal solution should offer an advanced video server that could easily handle advanced graphics, live audio/video feeds and stored clips through a single open interface. The acquired know-how could be used in all current and anticipated future projects maximizing the investment benefit.

Maraya TV has chosen the iOrasis Interactive Lite version that could support the need for handling in a single system graphics, stored clips and live video audio. The channel-in-a-box system is using the Matrox's DSX.LE Video I/O hardware from the Matrox DSX family. The advantage is that the combination of iOrasis Studio with Matrox DSX family of products could easily support projects in affiliate channels also. Although significantly different requirements exist for each channel and application the selected solution can support the future requirements from low-end to high-end projects using the already acquired in-house experience.



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The iOrasis advantage

Maraya TV provides a very well designed output in terms of graphics and visual effects. Large sequences of animations are used to offer eye-catching output with rolls and crawls that can display animated gif's with mixed Arabic and English text in different color and style. Live Video and Audio graphics with DVE effects are used in most live shows. iOrasis fully supports the above requirements in a single system and also provides the ability to improvise with original effects for visual and audible objects. Use of mask effects and key-frame sequences for attributes like size, position & fade provide an unseen level of control for live production systems. Innovative effects can be designed and modified by the broadcaster, opening new opportunities for creative professionals.

Maraya TV has tried two competitive solutions before iOrasis Studio that lacked the versatility and features available in iOrasis. There were tasks that simply could not be implemented or there were restrictions on the output. For instance - when using iOrasis Studio - the IT/Department was able to come up with an advanced Video Playlist that is capable of mixing stored clips, live show and can also automatically play animated advertisements based on what is currently playing. Long Arabic text support and mixed text styles and colors were among the significant issues that Maraya TV faced with these solutions, but above all the limited control options was the main restriction.



Integration of iOrasis systems in the existing infrastructure was another main advantage of iOrasis. The remote control of the system has no limitations in comparison to the local interface, so all features can be fully controlled from more than one control rooms and the system can easily switch between manual and automated flow.



As Ali Shahbour Maraya TV Technical manager explains: "With iOrasis Studio you know how much time you need to finish a game or a project and you do not have to worry if the system is capable to do this. You can do anything when you have an open SDK". He also adds that the SDK licensing and structure easily supports a large development team in a cost effective way. "Our company has a team of developers who can all work on the same or different project, while in any other closed system only one could work on the system at a time".

This comes from the fact that there is the ability to develop in a standard desktop or laptop without special video hardware, since no further costs for development boards are needed and a standard VGA can be used for previewing.

Long term benefits

Dealing with live production in an interactive channel is an always changing and adapting environment. A flexible system that supports common broadcast building blocks via an open SDK is the only viable long-term solution. Ease of use, adaptation, integration and upgradability are driving factors in this decision and iOrasis Studio has been the choice for Maraya TV and Monty Holding.

"With iOrasis Studio you have the choice to implement whatever you want and you are not limited by the system capabilities. Maraya TV is an interactive music channel with viewers who really enjoy SMS voting and chatting. Using iOrasis means we can automate this process in a single system and save on integration costs and simplify deployment in new projects and other interactive channels" commented Ali Shahbour, Maraya TV Technical manager.



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